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## GUILDEROY

\*OUIDA \*

Author of "Under Two Flags," "Two Little Wooden Shoes," "Chandos," "Don Gesualdo," Etc.

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ISYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.1 Chapters I and II—Evelyn Herbert, Lord Guil-deroy, owner of Ladysroed, an ancestral home of boarty and wealth, is risiting his domain. His sis-ter, Lady Sunbury, a woman of great strength of character and will, chides her brother for his listless apathy, and orges him to exert himself in the cause of the state and his country.

CHAPTER III—Lady Sunbury is of opinion that

her brilliant but blass brother should marry, but he decidedly objects to this, for so far as his life is pledged at all it is given to a woman whom he can not marry. His sousin, Lord Aubrey, pays him a visit, and informs him that the Duchess Soira, whom he had met at Marlenbad, had expressed considerable bitterness at not meeting Guilderoy according to

CHAPTER IV.

THE next day, after his cousin's departure, very early in the forenoon Guilderoy rode out whilst the day the day was still young. Riding was the only active exercise which

pleased him; he rode well, and with great boldness and sureness; his sister sometimes told him that it was the only English taste that he possessed. He could ride many miles without passing the limits of his own land, and much of this was the wild moorland lying high and wind-blown between the woods of Ladysrood and the cliffs by the sea. Over the short elastic turf he could gallop for hours and meet no fence, or boundary mark, or human jaws. habitation. The western wind came straight in his face from the Atlantic, and there was nothing but salt water between him and the coast of Maine. The world had been too much with him to leave him world, and revived in the force it had in his boyhood whenever he was alone in the open air or moor or shore or mountain.

The moor and the shore and the mountain could not hold him very long, but while it lasted his sympathy with them was sincere and his pleasure in their loneliness very real. It was not the love of Wordsworth or of Tennyson, but it was genuine in its kind, and gave momentary seriousness and romance to his temperament and his thoughts. In the heart of a man who loves nature there are always some green places where the caravan wheels of the world have not passed, or the hoofs of its carnival coursers trodden. It was seldom that he saw anyone or anything on these moors beyond a peddler

or a turi-cutter, a carrier's cart creeping slowly across the track which led from one hamlet to another, or a cottager carrying on her head a bundle of cut furze or a basket of bilberries, that he looked curiously at a little crowd people which he saw at the against the light of the sky. From them, as he drew near, there came to his ear an angry, screaming noise, the ugly noise of irritated roughs, and he could distinguish the uncouth figures of village lads about whom several lurchers and other dogs were jumping and yelling excitedly. The center of the excitement was a hut or cabin made of wattles, such as was used by the turf and bog cutters of the moors: generally such places were only used for shelter in bad weather, but this one was stronger than most, and braced with beams, and had a door of wood, having served as the home of some squatters at one time, though of late it had been

"They are after some barbarous sport or another," thought Guilderoy, as he heard the hoarse shouts. "Torturing some ast, very likely, or, perhaps, some half-

witted human creature." He turned his horse to the left and rode toward the little mob, which was a very rough one, composed chiefly of lads from the other side of the moors, where the in it answered through the door: scattered and uncared-for people were more savage and uncouth than those on the domains of Ledward domains of Ladysrood.

"Let un fire her out!" he heard one of n cry, as he rode nearer, and the

out!"
Who is she?" asked Guilderoy, "and are you going to do? What do you by your threats about fire?" ders looked at him sullenly.

their own bulldogs, and small, dull, savage | marked. eyes, items of that enlightened and purified democracy to which is henceforth trusted the realm of Britain.

It was a Saturday morning, and they "What are you about?" asked Guilde-

roy again, more imperiously.

What struck him as singular was that the faintest sound came.

"Have they frightened to death what- door. ever it is they are persecuting?" he thought, with difficulty keeping his horse ing gestures of the youths.
"What are you about?" he demanded;

"answer me at once. What deviltry are He had little doubt that they had | whip. hunted in there some poor old creature was firmly believed in on the moors, and safely. often rudely dealt with by village super-

This clamour ceased a little while, and one of them called to him: "She's shut herself in with it, and it's out; she's kept us here fooling us three

"What is it? and who is she!" asked Guilderoy, and he struck with his ridingwhip out of the hand of the man who There was a quantity of dry furze already | seamstress, but there was an aristocracy piled against the wall of the hut, which, in the look of the wearer which made if set alight, would have flared like

They did not reply, but some of them roared like animals deprived of prey which they had thought safe in their

"Answer me," he repeated, "you know who I am. I have a right to be answered;

"Tis a tod," one of them shouted, "and we turned it out to hunt it with the dogs, and we'd run it into a cranny, and she leisure for the enjoyment of nature, but come up and catch hold of it and tear he had a vague feeling for her which re- away, and we hunted of her then in here, sisted the opposing influences of the and she's fleet of foot as any hare, and she hied in quick as thought and banged the door and barred it, and she's kept us making fools of us three hours if one, and she knows we'll burn her out, and she won't give it up, and she knows we bought it at the public at Cherriton for we told her so, and brought it a bag and turned it down, only it run bad because it's such a little un.'

"You have lost a fox-cub, I understand," said Guilderoy when the narrator ceased. "But who is it that you have in there, and that you are brutes enough to want to burn out?" "It's the young un of Christalea," said

the youth sullenly. "Who do you mean?

"Tis the Vernon girl," cried another of the rioters, "She's a spirit she have, but we'll break it. We'll have the tod if we have him roasted.'

"You unutterable beasts!" cried Guilderoy, in the passion which cowardice and tyranny together rouse in a man who is | you very much, though I do not know both courageous and merciful. "Do you | who you are." mean to say that there is a child or a girl in there?"

"She went in with the tod," said the lad, sullenly, and those around him yelled in chorus. "How dared she go and take the beast and spoil our sport? The tod was ours, not hers. And she cuddled it up in | they say," she said, "but you are never | all the fruits of the land without toiling her neck as if it was a baby. We'll burn | there. Why are you always away?" her out, and then we'll toss up for her,' cried another voice, and the suggestion was received with shouts of applause.

"You are on my land, and I am a magistrate," said Guilderoy, controlling with difficulty his fury and disgust as he dis- here.' mounted, and holding his plunging horse with one hand, with the other he struck the handle of his whip on the door of the

"My dear, do not be alarmed," he said to the unseen occupant within. "These brutes shall not hurt you. Open the door. I will take care of you. I am Lord Guilderoy, and these moors are

A very clear young voice with a tremor "I can not open it, because if I do they will take the little fox."

"No, they shall not take the cub," said Guilderoy, and he turned to the men. | not hounds, you know, but any kind of come shout was echoed with noise and mongrels, but I will consent to believe the way it behaved. It did not know how that you would have failed to carry out to run; and was not even afraid. The is a sovereign for the loss of the cub; now | threw pebbles at it to make it run, but it | which will have most weight with you." do not forget that your miserable sport is | that it got behind a stone, I took it up and | did at last consent, and sprang with rapid- | fruit filled the air.

"Share fair!" yelled the others, and they fell on him; and wrestling, quarreling, yelling, and casting shamefaced and sullen glances over their shoulders at "the had nothing useful to do, and so were | lord," they slunk away across the moor in | the warm, amber light of the full ncon-

The ground sloped slightly downward to the northeast, and thither they went; whilst the young men and their dogs the rise soon screened their forms from were in an uproar, jostling, hallooing, view, though the echo of their voices, in swearing and yelping, from the hut not | rough and flerce dispute, came to the ear of Guilderov as he stood by the cabin

"Admirable persons to have been made our masters by act of parliament!" he quiet amidst the hubbub and the menac- | thought, as the sullen mutterings of their oaths came to his ear on the westerly Then he turned to the door of the cabin

and rapped on it with the handle of his

"The brutes are gone," he said through whom they thought a witch. Witchcraft | the keyhole. "You can come out quite

He heard a wooden bar lifted and dropped; the wooden door opened, and on the threshold, in the warm glow of the sunset, stood a young girl with a very beautiful face, which was pale but resoours, and we're going to burn 'em both lute; a Gainsborough face, with wideopened, questioning eyes and tumbled auburn hair, of which thick waves were escaping from a gypsy-shaped straw hat. A gray, woolen dress was fastened round her waist by a leather belt; it had been spoke a wooden box of lucifer matches. obviously made by some simply country him feel that, whoever she might be, she was thoroughbred. She was not nervous or agitated, only pale. She had placed the fox-cub on the ground that she might undo the bar of the door, and the little animal was shivering and trembling behind her. She took it up before she spoke to him.

"You are sure they are gone?" she asked, looking out across the moor. "Perfectly sure," returned Guilderoy, "But, my dear child, did you not hear them? They were inciting each other to

"Oh, yes, I heard them," she replied, tranquilly. "I think they would have done it, too. They are very rough and savage, those Cherriton people. It was

very kind of you to interfere."

"And what would you have done if the fellows had carried out their word? You would, ten to one, have been burnt "Oh, perhaps not," she answered. "I dare say they would not have let me really burnt; they only wanted to frighten me.

"And you would have run the risk rather than give up that cub?" "Oh, yes; I could not have given him up; and, besides, I would never have given it to them.

Guilderoy bowed to her with grave "You have great courage, and you have

another quality growing, rarer still-scorn She did not reply to the words. "I will go now," she said, "and I thank

"I am a neighbor of yours, I think; I live at Ladysrood." "Ah, I heard them say, 'It's the lord." She looked at him with more attention

and interest than before. "Ladysrood is such a beautiful place "I really hardly know," he replied; she seemed to him too young to be answered with a compliment. "You see the English climate is so detestable. I dislike rain, and there is scarcely anything else

"I do not mind rain at all," she said as Pray do not come with me. Our place is ten miles from here."

"Neither my horse nor I mind ten miles," replied Guilderoy, "and I most certainly insist on being allowed to attend you to your father's gates. Let me carry the cub for you. How is it he is so tame?"

and bring them up; and then, when they are a few months old, they are carried out to some waste place and hunted with dogs;

a fox-a grown fox-that the real hounds | head. hunted last year, and he ran down to the shore and took to the sea, and swam-oh, Guilderoy, as he studied her features and | bid you good-day here, and will call on so gallantly! The hounds could not get her form. She was tall and lithe, and adhim nor the hunters; but what do you | mirably made, like a young Diana; her |

anything to save him.' "Men are very ignoble; and the new like sunlight, frank and lovely.

worship of humanity has a beast for its god," replied Guilderoy. She went on walking, holding the little fox to her with both arms. Guilderoy walked beside her, with the bridle of his

horse over his arm. "But how can your father allow you to wander about so far all alone?" he asked, | puissance a puissance, who could bring looking at the profile of his companion, and thinking of Romney's Emma Hamilton, which it resembled.

She laughed, a child's careless laugh-

"I do not think he even knows I do roam about; he is so much absorbed in books and papers. He is so good to me-oh, so good! But he would never think to ask where I was all day; and, besides, the moors are as safe as our garden. Nothing has ever happened until to-day; and to-day the men would not have annoved me if I had not taken away their cub. Of course, I had no business, really, to take it."

"Why did you, then?" "Because I would much sooner do wrong-yes, even a crime, I think-than see see any helpless little thing hurt. Would not you?"

"Yes, I would certainly; I like animals. They are great mysteries, and men, instead of endeavoring to win their way into their closed souls, have only beaten the owners into captivity.

The girl paused a moment and looked at "I like you very much," she said, with gravity, as a child of five years old might

"I am exceedingly pleased," said Guilderoy, inclined to smile, for he was adored and flattered by all women of the great world, and used to the most subtle compliment, the most charming homage, "You have not told me whom I have the honor of speaking to. May I ask what is your father's name?'

"Our name is Vernon, Vernon of "Is it possible that your father is John Vernon, of Llanarth?" he asked, in in-

He remembered the name, though vaguely. When he had been a very young man the story of Vernon of Llanarth had been the theme of society for a season. He had forgotten it utterly for years; now its memories rose before him, shadowy, but full of reviving

"Yes; he used to be rich, but he lost all his money. It is many years ago. I do not remember his being rich at all. You seem surprised. Did you never know that we were here then? We are your

tenants, I think." "I know so little of the neighborhood." "Yes; and my father says it is very wrong of you. He says you play into the hands of democrats; that at the radical meetings in the great towns they always cite you as an example of those who have for it and take their substance from the poor to spend in foreign countries. Why

do you?" "I did not look for a political lecture," said Guilderoy; "I am always having one at home from my sister, and I am not aware that I take any substance from the poor. I believe, on the contrary, that the | pony. she left the cabin, still clasping in her poor are better off on the lands of Ladysarms the draggled and shivering fox cub. | rood than they are anywhere else in the southwest of England. Is it possible that your father holds these opinions? The Vernons were always whigs, but never

"He does not hold them. He is sorry that anyone holds them, and he is sorry that the great nobles who stay away from "They take little foxes from their earths excuse to make the people hold them."

"I am not sure that my example would be more edifying if I lived on them. If you will not let me carry that poor little beast for you, will you let me mount you "You have behaved worse than your | dog. I could tell this was a tame cub by | in my saddle? You are tired, though you will not own it, and you will be able to carry the cub much more comfortably for your dastardly and brutal threats. There young men chased it and lashed it, and himself, which is, no doubt, the argument go back to wherever you came from, and | did not know how. Then, when I saw | It was not easy to persuade her, but she

ranging from fifteen to twenty, beetle- | picked up the gold piece where it lay on | Men are so mean," she continued, with | thus laden, the horse paced slowly over browed, coarse-features, with jaws like the ground, to slink oil with it unre- the same scorn in her voice. "There was the elastic turf, the master walking at his | hedges.

"What a beautiful child," thought and saw him? They rowed so that they | beautifully set upon her shoulders, all her crossed his path, for he was making for a | features were harmonious, and her eyes tongue of land, and they beat him to were so large and lustrous that they would death in the sea with their oars-the cow- have made a plain face handsome; her ards! That I saw myself, for I was up expression had a curious mingling of inabove on the cliffs, and 1 could not do nocence, self-will, candor, pride, intelligence and childishness; her smile was

"In a year or two she will be the most beautiful woman in England," he thought, "and what a fine character, too!"

He was hot in the habit of noticing young girls at all. He, on the contrary, shunned them. He liked women who amused him, who could treat him do into their conflicts with him wit, finesse, and experience. This was the first very young woman of his own rank at whom he had ever seriously looked, and there was something in her which charmed and interested him. The tranquility in dan-ger which she had showed, and the selfpossession and simplicity which were characteristic of her manner seemed to him to be the acme of high breeding, whilst joined to them were a naivete and a childishness only possible to one who had led the simplest of rural lives, and

been little amongst women. He knew the name of John Vernon, though ever since his own boyhood it had been unspoken in his world. He remembered hearing what fine scholarship, what rare accomplishments, and what elegant dilettanteism had vanquished with this man from society when a total and voluntary loss of fortune had sent him into seclusion and oblivion, by the world forgot if not the world forgetting. And this was his child-it was not wonderful, he thought, it she had rare and delicate ex-

cellencies both of form and mind, "And have you always lived here? and on my land?" he asked of her, as he led the horse along through the golden haze

made by the morning sun. "No, only ten years. We lived by the sea, thirty miles away, first of all. That is what I first remember. The sea ran very high one winter's night and washed away our house, and my father had only just time to save me and some of the books. I can recollect it. They woke me and carried me out wrapped up in blank-ets, and I saw the great wall of water rising up above me; and I heard the crash of the house sinking; yes, I have never forgotten it. I was five years old. My mother died of the cold that night, and soon after we came to Christslea. My father likes it because it is so solitary, and has such a big old garden. I think we pay you £40 a year for it with the orchard."
"I am shocked not to know my tenants."

"How should you know any tenant when you are never here?" "I am here sometimes." "Oh, yes, when you have a number of great people, now and then, once in four

years. Myself, if I had Ladysrood, 1 would live there all the year round." "How happy Ladysrood and its master

"I am as happy at Christslea," she answered; "but I should like to see your great galleries, and the beautiful ballroom with the frescoes, and that staircase with the carving by Grinling Gibbons-it must be an immense pleasure to own a beautiful old house. I have heard a great deal of yours, though I have never

"You will now come and see it very often, will you not?" "It is a long way off, and I have no "I will send you a team of ponies, or I will come and fetch you myself."

seen it."

She laughed a little "You say that, but you will not do it, because you always go to Italy.' "Perhaps I shall not go to Italy this

"Then I will come and see you," said Gladys Vernon, frankly. In such innocent interchange of speech they wended their way across the moor to where the moors became meadow land | arty. It is well that you have so good a | use to us, like some people's lives to their and orchard land, and a hilly, uneven steward." road went up and down between high hedges and bilberry and briony.

"That is our house," she said, as she pointed to some twisted chimneys and a me to send you a mastiff or a deerhound?" thatched roof rising above a tangle of apple trees, elder trees, and hawthorn trees. The ground all about was orchard, and the strong sweet scent of the ripe

shrubs, between tall privet

she sprang down from the saddle. "I will good Rhenish wine still to offer you. your father later. Give him my compliments, and say how much I am indebted think some men did who were in a boat, feet were small and slim, her throat to the fox-cub for having led me to the tations of the great world. knowledge of my tenants.

"You have been very kind," said the girl, with her hand on the latch of the

"I have been very fortunate," said Guilderoy, "but if you will allow me a parting word of advice, do not wander so far alone. It has ended well this time, but it might end not so well. You are a gray Flemish pot, which filled the centoo"-he was about to say too handsome, but checked himself and said instead-"too young to roam about unattended. Demos is about everywhere, you know. By the way, what will you do with your protege, the cub?"

"I shall keep him in the garden." "Like Sir Rogerley de Coverley's

She smiled as at the mention of a dear

She gave him her hand with another of those smiles which made her more than ever like the Romney, and disappeared into the green twilight of the untrimmed garden ways behind the wicket.

"What a charming child!" he thought, "and she treats me much as she might treat the old carrier who crosses the moors, or the huckster who buys the orchard apples!"

CHAPTER V.

"Where have you been, my dear, all these hours?" a voice said from the green twilight of the tangled boughs and "That is my father! Wait a moment,"

branches aside and ran to him. her adventure and speaking of him by name; and in a few moments' time John | gree. Vernon came through the leaves and the | He was stirred to a novel sympathy with shadows. He was a slight, well-made | this lonely, scholarly gentleman, shut man, with a scholar's stoop in the should- away from the world under the boughs of

in its brightness, and there was humor, too, about the delicate lines of his mouth; he had once, like Ulysses, known well the | nothing of the complications of life; she cities and the minds of men. "My dear Lord Guilderoy," he said, as randa on her isle, and she had the intre-he stretched out his hand, "I am infinitely pidity and the insouciance of a Rosilind. obliged to you for having brought home my truant. She is growing much too old her. to wander like this, but I cannot get her "O to believe it; and her education, in some some indignation. "There is the garden, ways, has been sadly neglected. Come in | and the orchard, and I have a great many the house-your house, by the way, and I books, and I have a boat all my own let me understand better what has hap-

Guilderoy, won by the tone of the voice which addressed him, followed the speaker | do not wish to accept your theory of the indoors, leaving his horse at the gate. He said something to the effect that whatever the means of education the re- had any misfortune?"

sult obtained was admirable. "You must not say that," replied her father, with a smile. "You are very kind if you think it, for my poor little girl, age, and I make no doubt that she treated | you could not." you with very scant ceremony. I ought, you know," he continued with a sigh, "to send her to my people to be instructed in | dulgence."

all the decencies of society, and be brought out into the world. But I hesitate to do so. The child would be wretched amongst a number of distant relatives. I am poor, as you know. She would have to take the position of a Cinderella, and she would not take it; she is too proud, too used to freedom, and in her own way, to sover- | rood?" eignty, for she does precisely as she pleases

in this cottage.'

"She has an admirable manner," said breeding gives untaught. Is it indeed true that I have the honor to be your "We are hermits," replied landlord, Mr. Vernon?"

"Quite true; and we have had your house ten years; it would not suit many people because it is so far away from civlization, but it does suit me chiefly for | There are more unpoetical ways of reckonthat reason. You appear to be very little ing its flight. I forgot; we have a sun-ecquainted with the extent of your prop- dial, but it stands in the shade and is no ecquainted with the extent of your prop-

"I cannot think it safe for her to be alone," said Guilderoy. "She has not even a dog with her. Would you allow "There is a dog; we have a fine one; but he had lamed himself, and so was not about with her as usual. No; she must illegal on these lands. Go!"

The little mob wavered, growled, and lard as I could, and they ran after me. I swore under its breath; then one of them got in there just in time to bar the door.

She will be seventeen in an ity on to the horse's back, scarce'y touch other month. It is your luncheon hour, for up in the saddle in front of her, and, to him, overtopped with luxuriant un-

we dine at this time. If you will stay I shall be very pleased. My old housekeeper can roast a capon, and I have some

Guilderoy consented with much more willingness than he displayed to the invi-

The dining-room was a small, square plain room, which had been colored gray by a village plasterer; but John Vernon, in idle moods, had covered the walls with classical figures drawn in black and white and it had a look of good taste, enhanced by the old silver plate on the round dining-table and the autumn flowers set in a

"When you have only sixpence to spend you may as well buy a well-made thing as an ill-made thing," said John Vernon, as his guest complimented him; "and if you have only Michaelmas daisies and danflas to set out, you may well wells see that they harmonize."

He did the honors of his homely table with perfect grace and simplicity. His guest understood whence the girl had taken her high-bred repose. The repast was very simple; a plain soup, fish fresh from the sea, prawns stewed in sherry, and the capon Vernon had spoken of; but he had seldom enjoyed any banquet better. The keen air of the moors had given him an unwonted appetite. Gladys had changed her gown to a frock of white serge, and had tied back her abundant hair with a pale ribbon. She spoke very little in her father's presence, but she had so lovely a face, with a color in her cheeks like that of the wild rose, that Guilderoy almost preferred her silence; it became her youth; and the reverence she showed her father was touching and uncommon in days when English girls are chiefly conspicuous by their insolence and said the girl. And she pushed the their forwardness. However self-willed or high-spirited she might be to others, to Guilderoy heard her rapidly narrating | John Vernon she was gracefully deferential and submissive in an unusual de-

ers, and a scholar's brow and eyes; he was | Somerset apple orchards, and the child very pale and his step was feeble, but he | who had the beauty of the Romney Hamhad a smile which was infinitely engaging | ilton and the life of a young peasant. Her personal beauty pleased him; the one as much as the other. She knew had lived on these lonely moors, as Mi-

"Are you never dull here?" he asked "Oh, never," the child answered, with down on the sands. If people are dull," pened. Gladys has gone to carry this new protege to the cow's stable."

Guilderoy, won by the tone of the voice "I am often dull," said Guilderoy. "I "Why should you be dull? Have you

> "One big one, perhaps." "The death of anyone?"

Her voice was full of ready sympathy. "Oh, no; only that I enjoyed all things though she is not unpossessed of some | too early and too completely; a reason arning, is wholly ignorant of all that a with which you would have no patience, polite society requires in children of her | even if you could understand it, which

"My father says when we can not have understanding we should at least have in-

"A gentle doctrine; few practice it, Would you be indulgent to me? "Gladys does not understand how you can want indulgence," said John Vernon.
"The lord of Ladysrood seems to her to be higher and happier than kings." "When will you bring her to Ladys-

"We never leave home." "You must make an exception for me," said Guilderoy, as he saw how the child's Guilderoy, "only such a manner as high | face changed in a moment from eager ex-

"We are hermits," replied Vernon. "I have forgotten what the outer world is like, and Gladys has never seen a glimpse of it. We count time by the blossoming and the gathering of our rennets and king pippins.

possessors. "Please do not suggest discontent here," he added in a low tone. the curse of modern life. As yet it has not passed this little wicket, and I shall thank you not to raise the latch for it.

"Forgive me," said Guilderoy; "I spoke learn to stay within bounds, and pay the penalty of losing the happy immunity of meeting which has given me so much childhood. She will be seventeen in an- | pleasure if I were the means of letting a